



5. The AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision

While the Southwest Waterfront Development Plan is focused on a transformation of the waterfront that is realistic for immediate implementation, based on land ownership, economic factors, and infrastructure constraints, the AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision expands the planning focus to include a larger land area and a set of longer-term planning concepts and ideas. The AWI Vision includes a number of aspirations, which, should they prove feasible, have the potential to build on and complement the Development Plan. However, the actions outlined in the Development Plan can all occur independent of the ideas included in the AWI Vision.

The AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision extends the planning area both to adjacent land areas that are currently under federal control, such as the 10th Street Overlook and Hains Point, controlled by the National Park Service, and to the Washington Channel itself.

The long-term goals in the AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision include;

- A rethinking and potential relocation of maritime activities and uses in the Channel;
- The creation of a Visitor and Transportation Center integrated with monument or memorial sites on the 10th Street Overlook;
- Major new pedestrian connections to L'Enfant Plaza and the Waterfront Metro station at Waterside Mall;
- The potential expansion of the Fish Market;
- An expanded Civic Park at the southern end of the site;
- Future opportunities to introduce major new land-side and waterborne transportation facilities such as light rail, water taxis, and ferry service.

Defining the final shape of many of these initiatives will require time and the involvement of a number of different participants. The AWI Vision identifies the big-picture ideas, and, building on the Development Plan, addresses the challenge of moving forward on the Southwest Waterfront in a way which will tie redevelopment to the bigger evolving picture of the reclaimed Anacostia River and the long term growth of the City.



FIGURE 5.1
AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision





DRAFT



FIGURE 5.2
AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision



DRAFT

10th Street Overlook Site

The 10th Street Overlook, a highway off-ramp, and a pair of access roads currently occupy a 7.8 acre hill that was created with landfill excavated from the construction of the Southeast/Southwest Freeway. Owned by the National Park Service (NPS), the overlook was designed as a gateway to the Southwest Waterfront from L'Enfant Plaza and the National Mall, but pedestrian access from one to the other is practically non-existent. Today, intrepid pedestrians climb down the side of the hill and cross the busy traffic of Maine Avenue to reach the Fish Market, creating unsafe conditions. The barren design of the L'Enfant Promenade also discourages pedestrians from approaching the Southwest from the National Mall.

The site's location at a gateway to the waterfront, its symbolic importance as the terminus of 10th Street, and its proximity to I-395 affords a great opportunity to improve access between the waterfront and the National Mall, and to create a significant new destination. These advantages contributed to the selection of the site as a "Prime Candidate" for a national museum or memorial in the NCPC Museum and Memorials Plan. A single facility on this site can provide pedestrian access to the waterfront, include ample parking and bus facilities for visitors, and create a site for a major museum or memorial. Such a development would have a strong relationship with the proposed Market Square, creating a cluster of major visitor destinations, shopping and recreational areas in close proximity.

Visitor and Transportation Center

A multi-level parking and intermodal transportation facility can be accommodated on the site below the level of the current 10th Street Overlook, providing approximately 1,200 parking spaces and a terminal and parking facility for commuter and tour buses. The current off-ramp from I-395 can be reconfigured to provide direct highway access for buses and vehicles into the facility, diverting bus traffic from local neighborhood streets. The parking and transportation uses would be hidden from view by retail spaces fronting Maine Avenue, and potential residential townhouses facing 9th Street. A large lobby for the Visitor and Transportation Center would be located on Maine Avenue across from the Market Square, where visitors could transfer to taxi or local buses or walk to the waterfront promenade and Fish Market.



CONCEPT DESIGN FOR THE
10TH STREET OVERLOOK/NPS SITE

- A: IMPROVED L'ENFANT PROMENADE
- B: NEW PUBLIC STAIR CONNECTION
- C: VISITOR AND TRANSPORTATION
CENTER BELOW PLATFORM
- D: POTENTIAL NATIONAL MUSEUM OR
MEMORIAL SITE
- E: MARKET SQUARE
- F: MUNICIPAL FISH WHARF



FIGURE 5.3
10th Street Overlook / NPS Site



FIGURE 5.4
Aerial view of 10th Street Overlook



FIGURE 5.5
View of Highway 395 from 10th Street



FIGURE 5.6
View of 10th Street Overlook from Maine Avenue



DRAFT

NPCPC Monument or Memorial

The design of this site can include the creation of a grand public staircase from the Overlook level down to Maine Avenue, where a signalized pedestrian crossing will provide safe access to the waterfront. These improvements will provide an easy visual and physical connection from the waterfront to the office buildings north of the highway and to the National Mall, and allow pedestrians to access the L'Enfant Plaza Metro station which connects to several commuter rail lines. A grand staircase will also be an exciting and dynamic civic space in its own right. Public stairs in cities around the world create natural public gathering places, beautiful views and opportunities for dramatic architecture.

Grand Civic Staircase

The creation of a major museum or memorial on the site is facilitated by the framework of public space, pedestrian connections, and parking and transportation facilities described above. The 10th Street Overlook site is of sufficient size to comfortably accommodate all of these components. The diagrams in figures 6-8, 6-9, and 6-10 illustrate the space available. For comparison, the Jefferson Memorial, East Wing of the National Gallery, and U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum can each easily fit on the site with large amount of room to spare for public open space or other developments. This new cultural facility would be constructed over the proposed Visitor and Transportation Center, at the L'Enfant Promenade level. Loading and service access can be provided below the cultural facility adjacent the parking and bus areas.



FIGURE 5.7
Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, Washington



FIGURE 5.8
Scale comparison: Jefferson Memorial

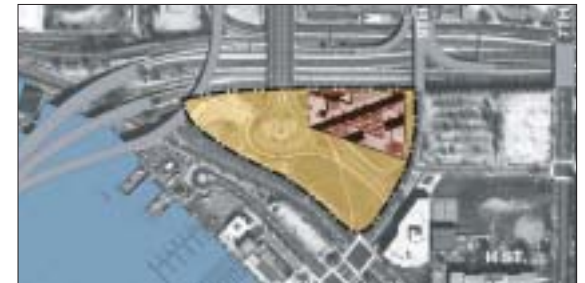


FIGURE 5.9
Scale comparison: National Gallery of Art East Wing



FIGURE 5.11
Parc Bercy, Paris France



FIGURE 5.12
Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Germany



FIGURE 5.13
Spanish Steps, Rome, Italy



FIGURE 5.10
Scale comparison: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum



DRAFT

Water Plan

Relocate Cruise Ships

In the AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision, the cruise ships move from their current location at the southern end of the project area to two new piers located adjacent to the Fish Market. The relocation of the cruise ships will relieve a current land-use conflict between the traffic and activity of the cruise lines and an adjacent quiet residential neighborhood. This move will locate the cruise lines appropriately, concentrating commercial uses around the proposed Market Square, the center of urban activity in the Plan.

In order for the relocation of the cruise ships to occur, there must be adequate and convenient parking to meet the needs of the cruise operations. The proposed Visitor and Transportation Center at the 10th Street Overlook site will provide the needed parking capacity, both for the cruise lines and for other surrounding activities.

Rearrange Marina Facilities

The existing marina slips will be reconfigured to accommodate the relocation of the cruise ships. This adjustment will also provide a more appropriate land-use relationship, locating less active marina and live-aboard uses near residential neighborhoods and away from commercial areas. Based on the planning team's preliminary assessment, this rearrangement can occur while maintaining the total number of existing marina slips.



FIGURE 5.14
Relocate Cruise Ships and Marina



FIGURE 5.15
Aerial view of Gangplank Marina



FIGURE 5.16
View of marina looking south



FIGURE 5.17
View from water to cruise ship facilities



FIGURE 5.18
View of Washington Boatlines pier



DRAFT

Expanded Civic Park and M Street Pier

The significant parking capacity currently required at the southern end of the site for cruise operations will no longer be needed after the relocation of the cruise ships. A significant amount of traffic will also be eliminated from the southern portion of the project area. This allows for the expansion of the Civic Park to over six acres, replacing most of the existing parking lots.

This large, public green space can accommodate a variety of passive activities, neighborhood recreational uses, and civic activities that complement the surrounding cultural institutions.

New Public Piers

The Civic Park in the AWI Vision also incorporates a grand public pier that extends the line of M Street over the water, providing expansive views of the Washington Channel and East Potomac Park. Public access to the large pier currently used for the Spirit Cruise operations will also contribute to the Civic Park. The pier structure could be reused as a cultural center, cafe or other park-related use.

In addition to the grand public pier in the Civic Park, additional public piers will be located at 7th and 9th Streets. These piers will connect to the Street End Plazas proposed in the Southwest Waterfront Development Plan. Like the M Street pier, these piers will allow the public to launch small boats, fish, and enjoy unique views of the Channel that are currently inaccessible without access to private marina piers.



CONCEPT DESIGN FOR THE
EXPANDED CIVIC PARK



FIGURE 5.19
New Piers and expansion of Site 6 Park



FIGURE 5.20
Charleston, South Carolina



FIGURE 5.21
Vancouver, Canada



FIGURE 5.22
Pier 1, San Francisco, California



FIGURE 5.23
Gantry Park, Queens, New York



DRAFT

Bus Operations

Relocating the cruise ships farther away from the Southwest's most concentrated residential area will also lessen the impact of buses on Southwest's neighborhood streets. The parking facilities proposed at the Visitor and Transportation Center will funnel tour buses into a new bus depot, eliminating the need for buses to pass through or idle on the neighborhood streets, while loading and unloading passengers within close proximity to the active commercial node around Market Square and the Fish Market.

Potential Fish Market Expansion

The Municipal Fish Wharf is one of the Southwest's long-standing attractions. People come from all over the city to the Southwest to purchase seafood at this unique on-the-water market. Improvements to the bathroom and parking facilities at the Fish Market are underway, and the existing fish cleaning building is scheduled for demolition and rebuilding this year. In the AWI Southwest Waterfront Vision, this neighborhood and regional asset will be further strengthened by expanding the market's pier structure, providing on-site seating areas for customers, and improving water views.

Water Taxis and Ferries

The Southwest Waterfront is an ideal location for significant water taxi and ferry access. In the AWI Vision, tourists and area residents will travel between multiple waterfront attractions and commuter stops along the Anacostia and Potomac Waterfronts, using the Southwest Waterfront as a hub. Although the Washington Channel is a no wake zone, water taxis and buses could travel between the tip of East Potomac Park to the proposed Market Square in 15 minutes.

Public Boating Access, Temporary Mooring, and Tall Ships

A lively and active waterfront along the Washington Channel will draw visitors by water as well as by land. Access points along public piers and mooring areas along East Potomac Park will allow boaters to come to the waterfront to enjoy a meal, an afternoon, or a weekend stay. The boating activity envisioned will provide passive and active entertainment for people visiting the Southwest on the water and from the shore. Among the moorings along East Potomac Park could be visiting Tall Ships, which will further enhance the maritime views for visitors to the Waterfront.



FIGURE 5.24
Proposed Fish Wharf Expansion



FIGURE 5.25
Water Plan



FIGURE 5.26
Fish Market



FIGURE 5.27
Water Taxi, New York City



FIGURE 5.28
Tall Ships in Boston Harbor



DRAFT

Metro Connections

Although the Southwest Waterfront is a short distance from both the L'Enfant Metro station at L'Enfant Plaza and the Waterfront Metro station at Waterside Mall, the walk from either station to the Washington Channel is bleak and uninviting.

An active and lively Southwest Waterfront will draw pedestrian traffic from these subway stations regardless of the quality of the walk, but as the Southwest Waterfront develops, improving the pedestrian environment between these stations and Maine Avenue will be a crucial step in reconnecting the District to its waterfront. The provision of multiple signalized crossings along Maine Avenue and a grand staircase leading up to the 10th Street Overlook Site will encourage safe, quick, and direct access to and from the stations. Attractive landscaping, a shaded walkway, and directional signage will all help make the walk an enjoyable one that will bring easy access to the waterfront from the Metro system.



FIGURE 5.29
Metro Connections



FIGURE 5.30
L'Enfant Plaza Station is a major commuter transfer point



FIGURE 5.31
Connection north along L'Enfant Promenade



FIGURE 5.32
View of Waterside Mall along M Street



FIGURE 5.33
Proposed redevelopment of Waterside Mall



DRAFT

Additional Vision Ideas

Pedestrian Bridge at Tidal Gates

The creation of a pedestrian bridge crossing the Washington Channel immediately south of the Case Bridge will better connect the Southwest to the Jefferson Memorial, the Tidal Basin, and East Potomac Park. This link would connect from the Potomac Scenic Heritage bike and pedestrian trailway to the Anacostia Riverwalk that runs through the Southwest, providing easier access to the Southwest Waterfront for visitors to the Memorials and Tidal Basin.

Light Rail and Possible Routes

The District Department of Transportation and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's current feasibility study of light rail and express bus service in the District includes alignments along the Southwest Waterfront. This type of public transportation service operates within the existing street right of ways. Proposed light rail connections to the Southwest Waterfront area could be located on one of the north-south streets such as 7th, 9th, or 12th Street, coming from the National Mall and continuing along Maine Avenue and M Street to the Near Southeast. The Maine Avenue median could be the location for one or more station stops. This would be a significant addition to existing transit service, and in the long term, could take the place of bus shuttle service to the waterfront.

New Metro Station

The possibility of creating an additional Metro station on the yellow line that crosses under Maine Avenue at the waterfront was considered. While preliminary analysis determined this to be technically feasible, the infrastructure costs of an additional station seem to outweigh its benefits at this time. However, as the Southwest becomes more active and frequented, this could be reconsidered.

Hains Point Canal

In the course of public workshops, the community and planning team discussed the long-range concept of a canal that would connect the Washington Channel to the Potomac River at the northern end by crossing Hains Point. This would provide flushing action for the Washington Channel, and would increase the boating activities at the northern end of the channel by allowing for easier access to the Potomac River.



FIGURE 5.34
Long-Term Vision Ideas



FIGURE 5.35
Pedestrian Bridge in Bilbao, Spain



FIGURE 5.36
Central Canal, Indianapolis, Indiana



FIGURE 5.37
Light Rail, Portland, Oregon